

Workingmen's Houses,
John H. Donahue House
98 Southern Avenue
Dubuque
Dubuque County
Iowa

HABS No. IA-159-R

HABS
IOWA,
31-DUBU,
14-R-

**PHOTOGRAPHS
HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA**

Historic American Buildings Survey
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
P.O. Box 25287
Denver Colorado 80225

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Site Location: 98 Southern Avenue
Dubuque, Dubuque County, Iowa
DOT designation: Resource Site No. 1.12
Cadastral grid : NE1/4 NE1/4 S36 T89N R2E
USGS quadrangle: Dubuque South Iowa 7.5'
UTM coordinates: 15.692040.4706120
Lot dimensions : 115'x 100': .26 acre
Lot description: Lot 5, North 25' of Lot 6,
South 40' of Lot 4, all in
Lot 2 of Randall's Subdi-
vision

Present Owner: Iowa Department of Transportation
Present Usage: vacant
Present Condition : fair / good

Overall Dimensions: main block: 22'x 24'; front porch, rear addition: 22'x 8'.
Orientation : east
Architectural
Description : Plan type : square, with enclosed porch at rear; 2 stories
Foundation: stone-pattern concrete block perimeter walls.
Structure : wood frame
Ext. walls: metal siding over beveled wood siding.
Roofs : moderately pitched, pyramidal roof over main
block; hipped roofs over porches; 3-tab asphalt
shingles on front porch and main block; asphalt
roll roofing on rear porch.
Chimneys : offset brick interior chimney, set on west roof
slope near ridge intersection.
Dormers : hipped dormer centered on front, with 3-light
fixed window and metal siding.
Windows : primarily painted wood 1/1 double hung, placed
singly or in pairs; living room front window
features fixed cottage window flanked on both
sides by 1/1 double hung; all have simple wood
casements with slip sills.
Openings : single-leaf main entrance offset on front porch
Porches : full width, single-story front porch supported
by 3 battered frame columns on stone-pattern
concrete block pedestals; concrete railing with
cast concrete balusters. Enclosed back porch
has hipped roof and banks of 1/1 double-hung
windows separated by narrow panels of beveled
siding; porch skirt is clad in same metal
siding as house; 3-step, open-tread wooden
stairway leads to door on back porch.

- Details : main and porch roofs have wide overhangs, boxed cornices and flush-board soffits.
- Garage : located behind house, a 20'x 20' square, single story building with a broadly overhung hipped roof covered with asphalt shingles and roll roofing; walls clad with narrow edged beveled siding. In the single dormer centered on the garage front is a rounded arch window with a wood keystone and fan-shaped mullion; exposed rafters in dormer; two paneled wood doors on the front: one triple-leaf garage door and a single-leaf conventional door.

Construction Date : 1917

Architecture Style: Foursquare Box

Physical History : Real estate speculator Joseph J. Nagle platted a subdivision of Lot 2 of Randall's Subdivision in May 1914. This land on the lower west side of Southern Avenue had previously been the site of Job Randall's sawmill. In September 1917 John and Katherine Donahue purchased Lots 3, 4 and 5 from Nagle (acquiring vacant Lot 6 in 1944) and immediately built this two-story frame house. The Donahues were long-standing occupants of the house. After John's death in January 1954, Katherine continued to reside here until the mid-1960s. Over this extended occupation, the house has undergone only minor exterior additions.

Significance: Whether it was prefabricated and purchased for \$1500-\$2500 through a catalog or was built on-site by a local contractor using a standardized design, the Donahue House looks like countless other modest patternbook residences constructed across Iowa and the country during the 1910s and 1920s. A foursquare box, even the small degree of ostentation presented by the concrete front porch cannot disguise this common workingman's house type.

References: Sanborn Insurance Maps: 1891, 1909, 1972.
Dubuque City Directories: 1900 - 1970.
Dubuque County Assessment Record: 3-32-3-3.
Iowa Department of Transportation, "Draft Environmental Impact Statement - Cultural Resources Assessment."
Land Title Abstract (located at Iowa Department of Transportation, Ames Iowa).

Compiler: Clayton B. Fraser, Fraserdesign, Loveland Colorado.
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